

Statement on Signing the Indian Land Consolidation Act Amendments of 2000

November 7, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1586, the "Indian Land Consolidation Act Amendments of 2000." This Act is critical to the economic viability of individually owned Indian lands and the success of the Department of the Interior's ongoing efforts to implement the American Indian Trust Fund Management Reform Act of 1994. It will help reduce the administrative and financial burden arising from the fractionated ownership of Indian lands.

The Act puts provisions in place for probate reform and establishing uniform rules for the descent and distribution of interests in allotted lands. It also contains provisions for the consolidation of fractional interests, as well as preventing lands from being taken out of trust when inherited by non-Indians. In addition, it will enhance opportunities for economic development by specifying the minimum percentage of owners of fractional interests that must consent to leasing agreements. Finally, it extends

the Secretary's authority to acquire fractional interests, of 2 percent or less, for tribal consolidation, through the pilot project that my Administration and the Congress initiated in 1999. Since many Native Americans die without wills, it also authorizes estate planning assistance.

The Act results from our close consultation and collaboration with the Congress, the tribes, and the Indian landowners that began in 1994 and has been one of my Administration's top priorities in Indian trust fund management reform. Today's action will help bring Indian land ownership, management, and development into the 21st century.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 7, 2000.

NOTE: S. 1586, approved November 7, was assigned Public Law No. 106-462.

Remarks on the 2000 Presidential Election and an Exchange With Reporters

November 8, 2000

The President. Good afternoon. Well, if ever there was a doubt about the importance of exercising democracy's most fundamental right, the right to vote, yesterday put it to rest. No American will ever be able to seriously say again, "My vote doesn't count."

The American people have now spoken, but it's going to take a little while to determine exactly what they said. The process for that is in motion, and the rest of us will have to let it play out.

I want to congratulate Vice President Gore and Governor Bush on a vigorous, hard-fought, truly remarkable campaign.

Thank you very much.

Conversation With Vice President Gore

Q. Mr. President, did you advise the Vice President to rescind his concession last night?

The President. No, sir. I didn't talk to him about it at all, one way or the other. I talked to him afterward.

We had a great talk later, when the situation was as it is now, and we were laughing. We had a—he was in a good humor. He talked—we talked about the unpredictability of life and how he'd done all he could, and he was pleased that he was ahead in the popular vote at the time. I don't know what the latest totals are. And we had a very good talk. And he congratulated Hillary, and they had a nice little visit.

But I was just like you last night—I was a fascinated observer. Thank you.